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DD/S 67-4118

11 AUG 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR : Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : Central Processing Branch

REFERENCES : (a) Memo fr DDS to D/Pers, Subj: Position Increase - Central Processing Branch, dated 30 June 1967

(b) Memo for DDS fr [] Subj: Request for Position Ceiling Increase - Central Processing Branch, Office of Personnel, dated 28 March 1967

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1. This memorandum is for your information only.

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2. In reference (a) you requested comments to certain proposals contained in paragraph 5 of reference (b), a memorandum prepared by [] upon completion of his survey of the Central Processing Branch (CPB). Before commenting on those specific proposals, I should like first to make some general observations about certain portions of reference (b) which, in part, have influenced my comments to the specific proposals.

3. In his memorandum, [] indicates that CPB is "in trouble" and discusses four main areas of concern. I do not share his conclusion that CPB is in trouble. In our request to you dated 31 January 1967 for position ceiling increases for CPB, we included statistics as evidence of the magnitude of the increased workload experienced by CPB from 1964 - 1966. It is significant to me and even surprising that the Branch performed this staggering amount of work with a limited number of personnel and with no discernible impairment of efficiency. Thousands of travelers have been and are being processed uneventfully, competently, and with due regard for all the many aspects of effecting the travel of personnel. That record of achievement, as well as the countless testimonies received commending the performance of CPB personnel, establishes in my mind not a Branch "in trouble" but, rather, one meeting its responsibilities capably—a credit to CPB personnel and management in the light of its acute need for personnel. At the same time,

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I agree that there are always ways to improve procedures and performance, and a review of CPB's operating procedures would serve to determine whether areas for improvement actually do exist. I will comment later in this memorandum on this, and merely wish to record here my initial disagreement with this one conclusion — that CPB is "in trouble".

4. In addition, reference (b) and especially paragraph 4a of that memorandum gives the impression that CPB is constantly on the receiving end of pressure to accept more and more functions and responsibilities which ultimately get assigned without consideration or evaluation of the impact such additional work will have on CPB's manpower and capabilities. While this has been true at various points in CPB's history, one of the problems we have experienced in the last 12 to 18 months has been to keep CPB itself from taking the initiative for the assignment of new work or responsibilities. For the record we wish to say that CPB interests are fully considered when questions of assigning new duties arise, although there have been some dramatic exceptions to this when even we were unaware that commitments of work to CPB were being approved, e. g., expansion of commuted travel.

5. The following comments are submitted on the specific suggestions contained in paragraph 5c and d of reference (b).

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a. Paragraph 5c(1) concerning the possibility of assigning a younger, more aggressive officer as Chief, CPB: The memorandum does not give the supporting rationale for this suggestion although we are able to infer some possible reasons for it being made. The implications of the suggestion are disturbing. Chief, CPB has been and is well suited to the job and is able to provide a steadying influence during many crisis periods. A good technician, he has not required close supervision and despite the heavy workload picture described in our initial request for increased ceiling, "flaps" have been few indeed. Although Chief, CPB has some weaknesses of which we are fully aware, he has discharged the duties of his office capably and should be able to continue to make a contribution during the few remaining years before his retirement. At the same time, however, we recognize the need to identify now an officer who might someday be expected to assume the responsibilities of the Chief of the Branch. Toward this end, we will initiate an effort to identify a qualified younger officer who through the process of association with Chief, CPB and on-the-job training can acquire the experience so vitally needed.

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In summary, we have reviewed the need for a younger, more aggressive Chief, CPB but have concluded that there is no substantive reason for making this change at the present time. Instead, we will take steps now to find and train an individual to head that Branch at some future date.

b. Paragraph 5c(2) as to the possibility of restructuring the Office of Personnel to provide direct access by Chief, CPB to the Director or Deputy Director of Personnel. Rationale for this suggestion is contained in paragraph 4a of reference (b) and contains three essential ingredients, i.e., that Chief, CPB must compete with other branch chiefs in Benefits and Services Division (BSD) for the attention and backing of the Division Chief; that the very function of CPB is alien to the main thrust of BSD; and that because Chief, CPB does not have direct access to the Office of Personnel front office his recommendations for the solution of his problems are not given adequate emphasis. It is important that I comment on each of these.

(1) The restructuring suggested appears to recommend that CPB be made either a division or staff that reports directly to the Director of Personnel or his Deputy. In our judgment, this Branch does not deserve this stature. It is an operating branch which belongs in an operating division. If it is logical that this Branch be placed organizationally in the Office of Personnel, it then follows logically that it be placed within the jurisdiction of the Deputy Director of Personnel for Operations and, in that directorate, logically in the Benefits and Services Division.

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(2) We do not understand the comment that Chief, CPB must "compete" with other branch chiefs in BSD for the attention of the Division Chief. As a matter of fact, very little competition exists for CPB. Particularly in the last year, CPB has been given the personal attention of the Chief and Deputy Chief, BSD on many matters. For example, during the past year acute problems of personnel staffing and procedures arose which involved discussions with the Offices of the Director of Logistics and the Director of Finance. Chief, CPB was fully assisted in the resolution of these problems by Chief, BSD and by the Deputy Director of Personnel for Operations. In others, solutions were worked out by Chief, BSD. We know of no problem area arising in the mind of Chief, CPB where he was not able to obtain the attention of Chief, BSD. Chief, CPB has had free

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access and has obtained front office support and attention where needed. Furthermore, even if there were merit to the comment that Chief, CPB has had to "compete" for the attention of the Division Chief, we fail to see how the "competition" will be any less in his efforts to see me or my Deputy.

(3) Concerning the statement that the function of CPB is alien to the main thrust of BSD: With its processing of people, albeit travel processing, CPB's function is not at all alien to the "main thrust" of BSD any more than insurance, exit processing, retirement, etc., might be. These all involve the "processing" of people in one form or another and it was this similarity that led to the re-assignment of CPB to BSD in 1962. In addition, there are some relationships involving CPB and other branches, e.g., Insurance and the Benefits and Counseling Branch, which are more easily developed and maintained because the branches are in the same division.

(4) In his memorandum, [redacted] uses the words "...the Branch Chief does not secure access to the Office of Personnel front office where he might expect that more emphasis would be given to his recommendations for the solution of Branch problems" in such a way as to suggest that the lack of such access because Chief, CPB reports to Chief, BSD has created problems or denied Chief, CPB a proper means to obtain guidance, decisions, etc. We know of no such instances. Certainly, Chief, CPB has not always had his way about things but as noted above, in the last year and a half Chief, BSD and his Deputy have devoted a fair portion of their time to CPB problems, some serious enough to warrant intercession of the Deputy Director of Personnel for Operations and me -- as in the case of our request for ceiling. We find no basis for the conclusion that the problems of Chief, CPB have not been given the necessary and appropriate emphasis.

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In summary, we have reviewed the suggestion but have concluded that no organizational change or restructuring is warranted at this time.

c. Paragraph 5d concerning the formation of a task force to review CPB's functions and procedures: We always favor a review of functions and procedures aimed at identifying areas of improvement, but we question whether a task force need be formed for this purpose. The Offices of Logistics, Finance, and Personnel could review their respective units

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independently and the relationships within the Branch could then be examined later when the three separate reviews have been completed. On the question of whether a review is really necessary at this time, we should like to note that the consolidation of the Personal Property Section with the rest of the Travel Section has already eliminated some of the early problems which existed because of the separation of PPS and which were probably observed at the time of [redacted] survey. We note further that the Inspector General is surveying the Office of Finance. Since it is possible that the IG survey will include a review of the Finance functions in CPB, we should probably await conclusion of the survey.

In summary, while we feel that this suggestion has merit, we plan to defer the suggested review of CPB functions and procedures. If it later appears necessary, we shall invite the Offices of Logistics and Finance to review their respective units as we shall concurrently examine the Personnel unit.

6. I want also to express our appreciation for your efforts in obtaining a ceiling increase for CPB and for the additional space which you made available. These two decisions should in large measure resolve some of CPB's difficulties.

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Emmett D. Echols
Director of Personnel